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FOR A FRAMEWORK CONVENTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE
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Item 5 of the provisional agenda

DESIGNATION OF A PERMANENT SECRETARIAT AND ARRANGEMENTS FOR ITS FUNCTIONING

Note by the Executive Secretary

1. At its tenth session, the Committee discussed this item on the basis of a report by the Executive Secretary (A/AC.237/60 and Add.1). Views were expressed on the subjects of possible institutional linkages for the permanent secretariat; financial rules, including sources and scales of budgetary contributions; and the physical location of the permanent secretariat (A/AC.237/76, paras. 117-120). The Committee took note of statements made by the representatives of the Governments then offering to host the permanent secretariat (Germany, Kenya, Switzerland and Uruguay), as well as by, or on behalf of, the heads of the World Meteorological Organization, regarding possible accommodation, and those of the United Nations Department for Policy Cordination and Sustainable Development, the United Nations Development Programme and the United Nations Environment Programme, regarding possible institutional linkages (A/AC.237/76, paras. 115-116, 121 and 125).

2. The Committee approved the establishment of a Contact Group for further consideration of these matters. This Contact Group, composed of the five members of the Bureau and thus representing the five regional groups, is intended to facilitate consideration of matters relating to the permanent secretariat and consultation thereon, by gathering and analysing information and views, without constraining action on these matters by the Committee itself. The Contact Group met during the tenth session of the Committee and reported back to the Committee certain conclusions regarding its work on three issues, namely, the institutional linkages of the permanent secretariat, the financial rules for the Conference of the Parties (COP) and its subsidiary bodies, and the physical location of the

permanent secretariat. The Committee endorsed the approach proposed by the Contact Group for work on these topics and requested it to report thereon to its eleventh session (A/AC.237/76, paras. 122-126).

3. Documentation on these topics for consideration by the Committee is contained in a series of addenda to the present note, as follows:

A/AC.237/79/Add.1 Institutional linkages:

conveying the advice from the Secretary-General of the United Nations on an institutional arrangement for the permanent secretariat and also containing related correspondence (see A/AC.237/76, para. 123 (a) and (b))

A/AC.237/79/Add.2 Financial rules:

presenting draft financial procedures and illustrative scales of contributions
(see A/AC.237/76, para. 123 (c))

A/AC.237/79/Add.3 Budget outline:

indicating possible functions and estimated cost of the permanent secretariat for 1996-1997
(see A/AC.237/76, para. 123 (c))

A/AC.237/79/Add.4 Physical location:

including, in a comparative table, details of the offers received from the Governments of Canada, Germany, Switzerland and Uruguay to host the permanent secretariat
(see A/AC.237/76, para. 123 (d))

A/AC.237/79/Add.5 Report by the Contact Group
(to be issued at the opening of the eleventh session)

4. In addition to these addenda, the full texts of offers by Governments to host the permanent secretariat will be compiled and issued in document A/AC.237/Misc.45 in the languages in which these were received by the interim secretariat.

5. Decisions on all these matters - institutional linkages, financial rules (including a budget) and physical location - are to be taken by the COP at its first session (COP 1). The Committee has stressed that such decisions at that time are essential (A/AC.237/76, para. 124): they will permit a smooth transition to the operation of the Convention budget and of the permanent secretariat in 1996, enabling work by subsidiary bodies and the interim secretariat to go forward in 1995 without interruption. Consequently, the Committee may wish to make a special effort to prepare agreed recommendations on all the matters covered by the addenda to this note, for consideration and adoption by COP 1.